

REMARKS

A first Office Action was mailed on June 28, 2004. Claims 1 – 22 are pending in the present application.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 10 – 13, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,236,996 to Bapat et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,594,656 to Arlein. Claims 3 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bapat et al. in view of Arlein and U.S. Patent No. 6,735,615 to Iwayama et al. Claims 4 – 9 and 15 - 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bapat et al. in view of Arlein and U.S. Patent No. 5,848,415 to Guck. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

In independent claim 1, Applicant claims:

1. An apparatus for managing a state of an external apparatus connected thereto, comprising:

a database storing the state of the external apparatus;

a managed object (MO) managing the state of the external apparatus, the MO being provided in said database and realized by an application; and

a control interface for said MO performing outer control from said database, the interface being provided in said MO.

According to Applicant's invention, a managed object (MO) is provided as one or more stored procedures coupled with one or more tables that are stored inside a database in the same manner as other information in the database. According to this configuration, "the user application 21 can access the MOs 30 and 31 only by having the interfaces A

through D for accessing the database 24 without using a special protocol since the MOs 30 and 31 are provided in the database 24 (see, e.g., page 13, lines 4 – 8 of Applicant's specification).

Further, "the MOs 30 and 31 are not provided separately from the database 24 as in the conventional method, but are provided inside the database 24. This enables the MOs 30 and 31 and the database 24 to share data, thus reducing an amount of communication and a total processing time" (see, e.g., page 14 line 33 to page 15, line 2 of Applicant's specification). As a result, 'by providing the MOs 30 and 31 inside the database 24, the transaction functions of the MOs 30 and 31 can be realized by using the transaction function[s] of the database 24 as it is. Thereby, no development of a new transaction function is required, thus resulting in reduced costs (see, e.g., page 15, lines 7 – 13 of Applicant's specification).

Bapat discloses a system and method for restricting database access relating to managed objects (see, e.g., abstract of Bapat). A database stores information relating to events and user access rights (see, e.g., column 16, lines 40 – 45 of Bapat).

The Examiner notes that user requests for information must be submitted as SQL queries to a conventional database management system (DBMS) 280 of Bapat (see, e.g., column 18, lines 25 – 30 of Bapat), suggesting that DBMS 280 may be considered to be equivalent to Applicant's claimed managed object (MO). However, unlike Applicant's claimed invention, Bapat fails to disclose or suggest that DBMS 280 manages the state of an external apparatus by means of a control interface provided in DBMS 280.

The Examiner suggests that access privileges module 284 of Bapat is equivalent to Applicant's claimed control interface (see, e.g., column 16, lines 44 – 50 of Bapat). As

disclosed by Bapat, access privileges module 284 is used to control user access privileges in regard to database tables storing database information. However, unlike Applicant's claimed invention, access privileges module 284 does not provide a means for DBMS 280 to manage the state of an external apparatus.

The Examiner acknowledges that Bapat fails to disclose an MO provided in the database, and suggests that this feature would have been obvious in light of Arlein. Arlein discloses a database system including a trigger gateway that acts to preprocess and/or act upon trigger commands targeted for the database (see, e.g., abstract of Arlein). The Examiner notes that Arlein discloses that databases that include DBMSs which function to manage data stored in the database and to process database commands (see, e.g., column 1, lines 20 – 37 of Arlein). Non-the-less, as in the case of Bapat, and in sharp contrast to Applicant's claimed invention, Arlein does not disclose or suggest that these DBMSs in addition operate to manage the state of an external apparatus.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is not made obvious by the combination of Bapat and Arlein, and is therefore allowable. Applicant also apply the above arguments to submit that independent claim 12 is allowable. As claims 2 – 11 and 13 – 22 respectively depend from allowable claims 1 and 12, Applicant further submits that claims 2 – 11 and 13 – 22 are allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1 – 22, including independent claims 1 and 12 and the claims that depend therefrom, stand in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited.

However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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